1: Tew E-4 (no date) 1950 FT7 Yao FT7

and £30 per annum. It is profitable to carry fresh fish inland by bicycle even as far as Blantyre,[1] as the shore price to the retailer is 4s. a load, which later may fetch from 16s. to 24s.[2] Yao on the south-west lake shore grow an excellent quality rice.[3] Rice is also grown near Lake Chilwa, but is mainly sold in the market organized near the lake shore by the Agricultural Department.

Division of Labour

The men build the house, hunt, fish, make the nets, baskets, grain-stores, game-traps, and, in the old days, the bark-cloth. He cultivates the tobacco. He cuts down the trees and may help with the hoeing and harvesting. The woman hoes, moulds the floor of the hut, sweeps, cooks, brings firewood, draws water, brews beer, makes the pots and pipes.[4]

Land Usage

There are two types of garden in the Yao areas south of Lake Nyasa: one the ordinary garden in which the staples grow, and second, gardens along the stream beds. These latter are especially valuable for providing out-of-season crops. In addition most householders have a few small plots for tobacco and ground-nuts.

The main garden is cultivated by the slash-and-burn method, common in Central Africa. The Yao, unlike the Bemba, garden occupies the whole area cleared. Burning is done just before the rainy season (October–November). The ash and soil are hoed into elongated mounds and grain is planted along the ridges. Gardens may be cultivated for more than five years. In the second and subsequent years of cultivation the stalks and weeds are piled up and burnt. These are signs of soil impoverishment. The gardens are cleared in August, and heaped to dry for burning. After the burning the seeds are planted in late November. By February and March green maize is available to supplement the diet, and by the end of April the crops are ready to be harvested. The maize is stored in wicker containers, while sorghum is stored in the huts on a stand. Cassava is planted in large mounds made by turning the turfs over, so that the roots are outside the mound and the vegetable matter inside. Legumes are planted in smaller gardens, or interplanted with the main crop. Ground-nuts are stored, after being shelled, in mud-plastered wicker containers, designed to be rat-proof. Tobacco is planted at the sides of the streams for hand-watering in the seedling stage, and then transplanted about January. The leaves are ready to be plucked about April and soon afterwards they are marketed. Sweet potatoes are planted in the rainy season, and are ready for eating in May. The stream gardens yield out-of-season crops—maize, beans, pumpkins, and also sugar-cane, which is used in the initiation ceremonies.

Craftsmanship

The Yao have few skills. All cultivation is by hoe; axes and knives are their only other technological equipment. The men make mats from reeds and palm leaf, and the women make pottery. The huts are strongly built from poles laced with bamboo and plastered with mud. The roof is thatched with grass. Under Arab influence the

[1] *Census of Native Population*, 1931, p. 26.
[2] Cunningham, 1898, p. 319.
[3] Swann, n. 1910, p. 236; Macdonald, 1882, vol. i, p. 130.
[4] Ayles, 1931, p. 19.

In Shannon D-6 (ca. 1913) 1922 FT? Yao FT?

303 Kpod near Sandoa. Sometimes pots are also rubbed all over the outside or in patterns with orange, a mineral graphite.

303 578 Patterns of a simple character, often of the herring bone order, are commonly graved about the neck of the pots with the aid of a stick of bamboo. There is considerable variety in the size and shape of the pots made. As with gourds, the pot takes its name from the use to which it is put and not from the shape or size. All pots have rounded bottoms; some have a flattened base or standard.

303 415 The following variation of pots may be mentioned:

1. *Libanda*, large pots for beer-making. These are usually roughly made and seldom have any decoration on them; they stand about two feet high and are wide-mouthed (Pl. XV, figs. 1, 4).

2. *Lwale* (*ulwale*, Chin.): water-pots. These are usually well moulded and well finished pots, full bellied with broad base and a certain amount of neck. They are practically always decorated and often coloured. They are about twelve inches high and twelve inches across the broadest diameter (Pl. XV, figs. 8, 9, 10).

3. *Chitchapo* (*ichale*, Chin.): cooking pots used for cooking the flour porridge, *upwil*. These are wide, open-mouthed pots six to ten inches high, with belly and more or less straight sides (Pl. XV, figs. 5, 6, 7). This name also applies to the cooking vessel for ceremonial occasions.

4. *Chijungo* (*ingalea*, Chin.): smaller pots of the same type as 3, used for cooking beans, fish, green stuff, and the relish *ndiwo*, (*ndiwo*, Chin.) (Pl. XV, fig. 3).

5. *Mbale* (*mbale*, Chin.): the bath water pot. The smallest pot used for heating water to bathe the husband after sexual intercourse bears the same name. It is found among both the *Anyanja* and the *Wayao* (Pl. XV, fig. 2).

6. *Mbale* (Yao and Chin.): the plain, a shallow, wide-open vessel.

Baskets. The basket work of the Yao is all of one type and is done by the men. All baskets are made of plaited strips of bamboo, the free edges of the strips being bound between thicker pieces of the same wood forming the rim, the binding being done with the stem of a creeper. They are made in various shapes and sizes. Some are rendered water-proof and used as beer mugs. The following types of basket are in use:

285 1. *Chisolo* (*ichisolo*, Chin.): a circular, open basket, shallow and wide, six to ten inches in diameter; it is used as a food dish or to winnow flour, etc. *Chitungo* (*mungwe*, Chin.), a rather larger one of the same shape, often decorated with beads is used to carry flour, while a still larger basket called *ukyata* is commonly used by the women for winnowing out the chaff from the partly pounded maize (Pl. XVI, figs. 11, 12).

285 415 2. *Lukolelo* and *ukilondo* (in Chin., both are called *mungo*): deep baskets usually about as deep as they are broad; the bottom is approximately square, but the rim is circular. *Chilondo* is about six inches high and six inches in diameter; *lukolelo* is about a foot in all dimensions. These large baskets are used for carrying any food-stuffs in bulk, e.g. grain and pumpkins (Pl. XVI, fig. 14).

3:Stanton D-5 (ca. 1912) 1922 FT7 Yao FT7

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8. *Mtengwi*: this large double basket one half of which fits over the other like a cover, is now very common among the Yao; it was copied from the Swahili *kipanda*. The body is made in the same way as the other baskets, but each half has a broad rim of wood which is always cut profusely into patterns (Pl. XVI, fig. 13, and Pl. XVII).

4. *Chimanda*: the beer vessel, a small hemispherical basket rendered waterproof by smearing with a sticky substance prepared from the pounded stem of the *mpesa* tree or from the root of the *mpesa* plant mixed with charcoal (Pl. XVI, fig. 12).

5. *Limangala* (Angoni, Chin.): the beer strainer made in the shape of *chitengu*, but the strips of bamboo forming the warp and the weft are of different thicknesses, so that spaces are left for the fluid to run through (Pl. XVI, fig. 14).

Mats. In years gone by the Yao made a rough kind of plaited matting of split reeds called *chipanda*; it is not seen today. Another type of mat seldom used today is the *kichilo* (*chilo*, Chin.), made of a number of reeds of equal length bound together by several rows of interlacing string (Pl. XVI, fig. 7). Reeds are also used to make the *ngwao* (*ngwao*, Chin.) (Pl. XVI, fig. 10). When dry they are split and fastened out with the smooth surfaces all on one side. A number of reeds so fastened lying side by side are then sewed together with native string, and form a clean, smooth mat for sitting or sleeping.

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Mats made of plaited strips of sun-dried palm leaf are now in common use, the art of making them, I believe, having been introduced from the coast. Large mats of this kind called *kimbi* are used in the chief's courtyard (Pl. XVI, fig. 9). Smaller ones called *mkeka*, or by the old people *mkanga*, made from the leaf of the wild date palm, are used for sleeping (Pl. XVI, fig. 6). Since the advent of the Europeans, mat making has become an important industry, and *kimbi* and *mkeka* are to be found in every European house.

A still finer kind of mat, slender in glue and stained in patterns, has lately been introduced by the Swahili. Red and black dyes are generally used; the red is either *ngwao*,[1] or a stain called *mkanda* prepared from the bark of a tree called *mundo*; the black dye is made from the root of a vine, *lilumanga* (*chilomo*, Chin.), the ink bean.

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The matting made of these strips of palm leaf is in the form of a ribbon from three to six inches wide, according to the fineness of the strips. The ribbon of matting is sewed into the form of a cylinder by plaiting the edges of the ribbon together in a large spiral. This cylinder of matting is then cut down one side and laid flat, and the cut edges finished off with a plaited mat border (Pl. XVI, fig. 6). It will be seen that, owing to the way they are made, these mats are never quite rectangular. The ribbon of matting used for the circular mats is sometimes still sewed round and round in a flat spiral fashion.

Cloth. The Yao in years gone by made a woven cloth, but the art has long since died out, and I have never seen a piece of native-made cloth. I imagine, inasmuch as bark-cloth is still worn by the poorer people, that the native-made woven cloth was only worn by the few, probably the chiefs. The other cloth was undoubtedly bark-cloth, worn, as I

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[1] See supra, p. 342.

Shannon D-5 (ca. 1912) 1922 FT7 Yao FT7

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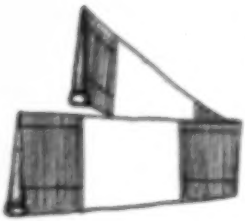

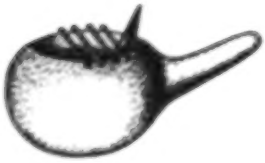

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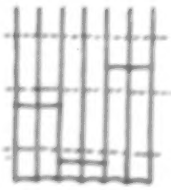

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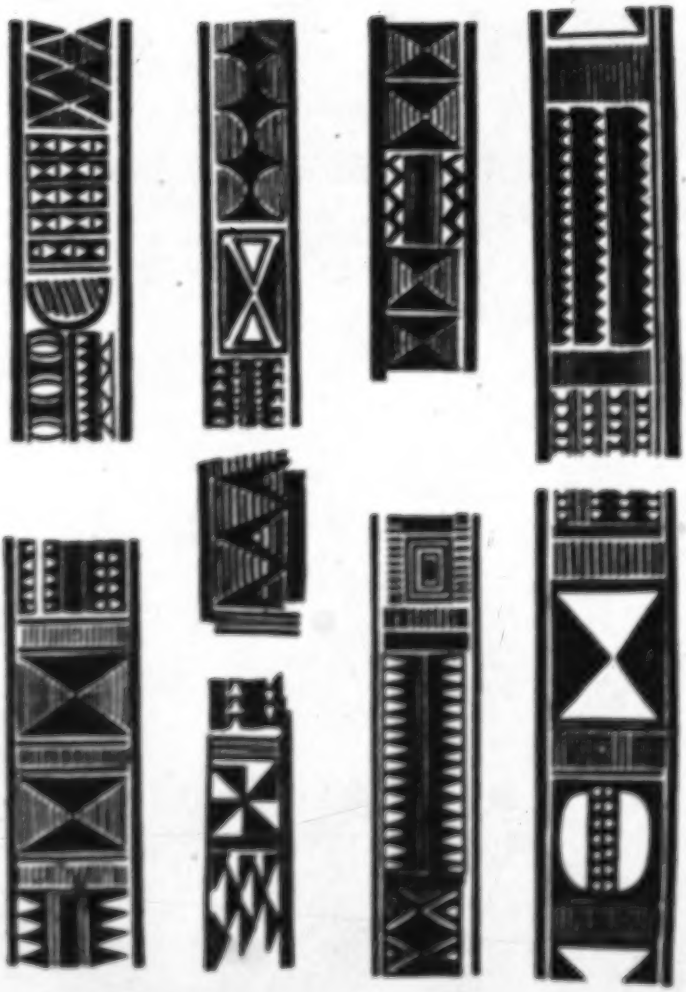

[End Plate 17]